

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT**  
**ZONING MAP AMENDMENT**

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**PZ-15-00136**

**DATE:** **February 12, 2016**  
**MEETING DATE:** **February 24, 2016**  
**REPORT BY:** **Tiffany Antol, AICP**

**REQUEST:**

A Zoning Map Amendment request from the City of Flagstaff Sustainability Program, on behalf of the property owner, City of Flagstaff, to rezone approximately 1610.69 acres located on Observatory Mesa from Rural Residential (RR) to Public Open Space (POS), rezone approximately 2.00 acres from Rural Residential (RR) to Public Facility (PF) and to apply the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) Zone to approximately 640.51 acres. This Zoning Map Amendment request is the third part of a three-part request; the first is an annexation of 640.51 acres and the second is a Regional Plan Amendment of approximately 2253.20 acres.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission forward the Zoning Map Amendment to the City Council with a recommendation for approval.

**PRESENT LAND USE:**

The site consists of vacant lands on Observatory Mesa consisting of 2253.20 acres.

**PROPOSED LAND USE:**

Future development is expected to consist of low-impact trails, interpretive facilities, and the most basic visitor amenities.

**NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT:**

North: Single-family residences; Agricultural Residential, 2.5 acre minimum (AR-2.5) zone and Residential Single Family, 5 acre minimum (RS-5) zone (County)  
East: Single-family residences; Rural Residential (RR) zone and Estate Residential (ER) zone (City)  
South: Railroad Springs Subdivision; Manufactured Home (MH) zone (City)  
Single-family residences; General, 10-acre minimum (G) zone (County)  
West: Coconino County National Forest lands; Open Space and Conservation (OS) zone (County)

The subject property is checker boarded with Coconino National Forest lands.

**REQUIRED FINDINGS:**

**STAFF REVIEW.** An application for a Zoning Map Amendment shall be submitted to the Planning Director and shall be reviewed and a recommendation prepared. The Planning Director's recommendation shall be transmitted to the Planning Commission in the form of a staff report prior to a scheduled public hearing. The recommendation shall set forth whether the Zoning Map Amendment should be granted, granted with conditions to mitigate anticipated impacts caused by the proposed development, or denied; shall include an evaluation of the consistency and conformance of the proposed amendment with the goals of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans; and, a recommendation on the amendment

based on the standards of the zones set forth in Section 10-40.20 “Establishment of Zones” of the Zoning Code (Page 40.20-1).

**FINDINGS FOR REVIEWING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS.** All proposed amendments shall be evaluated as to whether the application is consistent with and conforms to the goals of the General Plan and any applicable specific plans; and the proposed amendment will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City of Flagstaff (the “City”) and will add to the public good as described in the General Plan; and the affected site is physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, operating characteristics, and the provision of public and emergency vehicle access, public services, and utilities to ensure that the requested zone designation and the proposed or anticipated uses and/or development will not endanger, jeopardize, or otherwise constitute a hazard to the property or improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located. If the application is not consistent with the General Plan and any other applicable specific plan, the applicable plan must be amended in compliance with the procedures established in Chapter 11-10 of the City Code (Title 11: General Plans and Subdivisions) prior to considering the proposed amendment.

### **STAFF REVIEW:**

#### **Introduction/Background**

The Applicant, the City of Flagstaff Sustainability Program, on behalf of the property owner, the City of Flagstaff, is requesting a Zoning Map amendment to rezone approximately 1610.69 acres known as Observatory Mesa to the Public Open Space (POS), approximately 2.00 acres to Public Facility (PF) and add the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone to approximately 640.51. An overlay zone is a special zoning district placed over an existing zoning district, part of a district, or a combination of districts. Overlay zones build on the underlying zoning, by establishing additional requirements. In this case, the overlay zone would be in addition to the Public Open Space (POS) zone. Approximately 1612.69 acres of Observatory Mesa already have the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone applied.

With funding from the 2004 voter approved Open Space bond, the City of Flagstaff acquired Observatory mesa in November 2013 for the express purpose of preserving its unique recreational, educational, and natural resources.

#### **Proposed Development Concept Plans**

Future development is expected to consist of low-impact trails, interpretive facilities, and the most basic visitor amenities.

#### **General Plan – Flagstaff Regional Plan (FRP 2030)**

The *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030 (FRP 2030)* Future Growth Illustration (Maps 21 and 22) designates the subject site as Area in White/State Land. A minor Regional Plan Amendment will be heard prior to this application to amend the current designation to Parks/Open Space. If the Regional Plan Amendment is approved, the proposal to rezone the subject property to the Public Open Space (POS) and Public Facility (PF) zones with the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone will be in conformance with the Regional Plan. Staff has identified a total of 12 Regional Plan Goals and Policies that could be applied to support the proposed Zoning Map Amendment. A list of these policies is attached to this report. The most relevant policies were analyzed below:

***Goal OS.1. The region has a system of open lands, such as undeveloped natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, access to public lands, and greenways to support the natural environment that sustains our quality of life, cultural heritage, and ecosystem health.***

***Policy OS.1.2. While observing private property rights, preserve natural resources and priority open lands, under***

*the general guidance of the Flagstaff Area Open Space and Greenways Plan and the Natural Environment Maps.*

*Policy OS.1.3. Use open spaces as natural environment buffer zones to protect scenic views and cultural resources, separate disparate uses, and separate private development from public lands, scenic byways, and wildlife habitats.*

The primary purpose of this Zoning Map Amendment is to add layers of protection to Observatory Mesa. The majority of the properties will be zoned and regulated under the Public Open Space (POS) zoning, which is intended to be applied to areas of the City that are appropriate for designation as public open space to allow for resource protection and passive recreation uses. The two acres that will be rezoned to Public Facility (PF) currently consists of a tank farm maintained by the Utilities Division, which would not be a permitted use in the Public Open Space (POS) zone.

### **Zoning – City of Flagstaff Zoning Code**

The requirements of the Public Open Space (POS) zone and the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone are intended to promote the preservation and unique character of properties within the zone. Additionally, the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) provides standards for the protection of natural resources, including floodplains, steep slopes, and forest. The Public Facility (PF) zone is intended to provide areas within the City for active and passive recreation uses, parks, public open space, governmental buildings and facilities, schools and school grounds, quasi-public buildings and facilities and related uses.

### **PUBLIC SYSTEMS IMPACT ANALYSIS:**

#### **Traffic and Access**

No analysis was required.

#### **Water and Wastewater**

A water and sewer analysis was not required as part of this request; however, the Utilities Division did request a condition of approval allowing for the maintenance of existing and expansion of future utility infrastructure.

#### **Stormwater**

No stormwater improvements have been required.

#### **Parks and Recreation**

This Zoning Map Amendment expands recreational opportunities within the City's parks and recreation system.

### **OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **Resources**

The subject property will be entirely located within the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone as defined by Section 10-50.90.020.A of the Zoning Code (Page 50.90-2). Further, this application does not anticipate any physical modifications to the existing site. No impact to resources is anticipated.

### **Citizen Participation**

All property owners within 600-feet of this site were notified via mail of the zoning map amendment, annexation, and regional plan amendment and asked to attend the Open Space Commission meeting on October 22, 2015. Four individuals spoke in regards to the open spaces case but none directly in relation to Observatory Mesa. Minutes for this meeting are attached.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The application of the Public Open Space (POS) zone, the Public Facility (PF) zone, and the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone meets the intent of the Regional Plan goals and policies and will comply with the designation of Parks/Open Space if the accompanying minor Regional Plan Amendment is approved. These zones and designations work in concert to protect the natural resources on the property as well as support the City's Open Space program.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff believes that the proposed Zoning Map Amendment has been justified and would recommend in favor of amending the Zoning Map for approximately 1610.69 acres to the Public Open Space (POS) zone, approximately 2.00 acres to the Public Facility (PF) zone and to apply the Resource Protection Overlay (RPO) zone to 640.51 with the following condition:

1. The City of Flagstaff shall recognize existing easements and rights-of-ways granted by the Arizona State Land Department. All easements and rights-of-ways shall remain in full force and effect.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- o Zoning Map Amendment Application and narrative
- o FRP 2030 Goals and Policies – Full list
- o Open Space Commission Meeting Minutes
- o Public Hearing Legal Advertisements